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March 06, 1981

SITUATION REPORT

POLAND

The government has taken a potentially risky step against Jacek Kuron, who heads KOR, Poland's leading dissident organization. If pursued, it could eventually lead to a confrontation with Solidarity.

According to Western news reports, Kuron was taken before a prosecutor yesterday and officially informed that he is being investigated for "suspected slandering and ridiculing of the Polish nation, the Communist system, and authorities." He was allowed to go free but was instructed to appear twice a week at his local police station.

Over the past few months, Polish and Soviet leaders and media have repeatedly cited Kuron and other prominent members of KOR as leaders of the "antisocialist" forces in Poland. Both party conservatives and Moscow reportedly have demanded that action be taken to restrict KOR's influence within Solidarity.

The government's action comes the day after party chief Kania and Prime Minister Jaruzelski returned home from apparently tough talks in Moscow with Soviet leaders. It may be designed to placate the Soviets as well as some domestic hardliners.

The move still has a tentative quality, and party leaders will be watching carefully for Solidarity's reaction. This could come today, when Solidarity leader Walesa meets with Jaruzelski.

The national Solidarity leadership evidently has called an emergency meeting for tomorrow to discuss this matter. Walesa has stated privately and publicly that the union would strike to protect the dissidents associated with Solidarity should they be arrested. Even though dissident intellectuals are not held in universal esteem by workers, and Kuron himself is not well liked, his arrest or jailing would be widely seen as a direct assault on Solidarity.

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Kuron and KOR have been acting with some moderation and have, in fact, stopped strikes when even Walesa appeared powerless. The government has focused its attention on Kuron and the other dissidents, however, because they have written extensively about their long-term goals for eventually bringing about a radical reform of the country's political system. The regime fears the workers may become infected with these ideas.

Warsaw Pact Exercises

Preparations are continuing for the large Warsaw Pact exercise or series of exercises to be held in and around Poland during the next two weeks.

Armored vehicles belonging to a Polish mechanized division at Rembertow were parked outside of their sheds yesterday, and at least nine were loaded on railroad flat cars. We have had no information that this division will participate in the coming exercise.

in the Carpathian Military District this week. [redacted] who traveled through the district on Monday and Tuesday reported seeing mobile communications stations, which serve Army and lower echelon forces, set up in a number of locations. Preparations for a front-level command post exercise among Soviet forces in East Germany also were noted yesterday.